

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 09546 242013Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----104790 250537Z /13

R 241757Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8863
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 09546

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, UR, GW
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV EXPRESSIONS OF UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE
UNITED STATES DURING HIS VISIT HERE

1. AS THE POST MORTEM HERE ON THE BREZHNEV VISIT CONTINUES, WE HAVE PICKED UP TWO INTERESTING REPORTS, WITH CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS, REGARDING EXPRESSIONS OF SOVIET UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE UNITED STATES.
2. CDU OPPOSITION LEADER KOHL HAS TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT, DURING HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH BREZHNEV AND PARTICULARLY WITH BREZHNEV'S AIDE ALEXANDROV, THE SOVIETS SPOKE OF THEIR UNCERTAINTY ABOUT AMERICAN POLICY AND ABOUT WHAT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT DO NEXT. SEPARATELY, GENSCHER'S AIDE KINKEL TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT BREZHNEV, DURING HIS MEETINGS WITH SCHMIDT, SPOKE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS OF HIS UNCERTAINTY ABOUT AMERICAN POLICY.

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3. OUR TWO SOURCES PUT RATHER DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS ON THIS. KINKEL SAW IT PRIMARILY AS AN EFFORT BY BREZHNEV TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PRESIDENT FROM SCHMIDT WHO HAD ALREADY MET WITH THE PRESIDENT AS BREZHNEV HAD NOT. KINKEL TOLD US THAT SCHMIDT REPLIED IN VERY POSITIVE TERMS ABOUT THE PRESIDENT.

4. KOHL, ON THE OTHER HAND, INTERPRETED BREZHNEV'S REMARKS MORE SUSPICIOUSLY. HE TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE THOUGHT BREZHNEV AND OTHER SOVIETS WERE SUBTLY ATTEMPTING TO CONVEY THAT THE GERMANS SHOULD FEEL SOME UNCERTAINTY ABOUT US POLICY AND SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE PREPARED TO ESTABLISH BETTER TIES WITH MOSCOW.

5. WE ARE UNABLE TO EVALUATE THESE INTERPRETATIONS. WE HAVE NO REASON TO QUESTION THE RELIABILITY OF EITHER OF THE SOURCES FOR THESE REPORTS. HOWEVER, WE WOULD ADD THAT FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY DETECTED NO EFFORTS BY BREZHNEV TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN THE FRG AND THE UNITED STATES. STOESSEL

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